

## Message Text

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51

ACTION NEA-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 OMB-01 INRE-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00 USIE-00

CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-07

PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01 SP-03 SS-20 NEAE-00 DRC-01 /074 W

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O R 101403Z APR 74

FM AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 2130

INFO AMCONSUL JERUSALEM

C O N F I D E N T I A L TEL AVIV 2122

EO 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT IS

SUBJ: ISRAELI GOVERNMENT CRISIS APPROACHES DECISIVE HOUR

REF: TEL AVIV 2086

1. LABOR PARTY LEADERSHIP IN LAST TWENTY FOUR HOURS HAS INTENSIFIED PACE OF CONSULTATIONS IN EFFORT TO AVERT GOVERNMENT'S RESIGNATION AND PROLONGATION OF CURRENT CRISIS WHICH INEVITABLY WOULD FOLLOW IN ITS WAKE. DESPITE FAILURE OF LATEST CONSULTATIONS TO BREAK DEADLOCK, AND SENSE OF PESSIMISM WHICH PERVADES MEDIA REPORTING, THERE REMAINS REASONABLE CHANCE THAT LAST-MINUTE "SOLUTION" WILL YET BE FOUND. LABOR PARTY'S EXECUTIVE AND KNESSET FACTION WILL MEET THIS AFTERNOON, THE CABINET WILL CONVENE APRIL 11 IN THE MORNING AND THE KNESSET DEBATE HAS BEEN MOVED FORWARD TO THE AFTERNOON, BEFORE KNESSET CONVENES, MRS MEIR WILL HAVE TO DETERMINE WHETHER SUFFICIENT CONSENSUS EXISTS WITHIN LABOR PARTY AND ITS COALITION PARTNERS TO ENABLE HER TO WIN VOTE OF CONFIDENCE OR WHETHER SHE HAS NO CHOICE BUT TO ANNOUNCE AT OPENING OF KNESSET SESSION HER, AND THE GOVERNMENT'S RESIGNATION.

2. DAYAN REPORTEDLY ASKED JUSTICE MINISTER ZADOK AT APRIL 9 CABINET MEETING TO FURNISH HIS OWN AND ATTORNEY GENERAL'S LEGAL OPINION AS TO WHETHER AGRANAT COMMISSION'S INTERIM REPORT  
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REQUIRES HIS RESIGNATION. ACCORDING TO NEWS REPORTS, DAYAN

INDICATED THAT IN CASE OF AN AFFIRMATIVE REPLY HE WOULD RESIGN IMMEDIATELY WHEREAS IF QUESTION OF HIS RESIGNATION WERE INTERPRETED AS A POLITICAL ISSUE, ANY DECISION WOULD HAVE TO BE THE RESULT OF PARTY CONSULTATIONS. WE BELIEVE THAT DAYAN MAY BE TRYING TO OPEN THE DOOR TO A FACE-SAVING SOLUTION WHICH WOULD ALLOW HIM TO CHANGE PORTFOLIOS WITHOUT PRECIPITATING GOVERNMENT'S RESIGNATION. PRESUMABLY, IF DAYAN WERE TO CONCLUDE THAT ON LEGAL GROUNDS HE HAD NO CHOICE BUT TO RESIGN, THIS WOULD PROVIDE HIS RAFI SUPPORTERS WITH SUFFICIENT JUSTIFICATION FOR REACHING POLITICAL AGREEMENT TO KEEP THE PARTY AND THE GOVERNMENT TOGETHER.

4. LABOR PARTY SPOKESMAN HAS TOLD US TODAY THAT, IN HIS JUDGMENT, COMMON INTEREST OF ALL LABOR PARTY FACTIONS, INCLUDING RAFI, TO PREVENT CRISIS FROM PROCEEDING FURTHER AUGURS WELL FOR LAST-MINUTE SOLUTION. GENERAL AWARENESS THAT NO ONE IN LABOR PARTY STANDS TO BENEFIT FROM NEW ELECTION AND GREAT UNCERTAINTY ABOUT OUTCOME OF SUCCESSION STRUGGLE SHOULD MRS MEIR REFUSE TO CONTINUE IN OFFICE, HE BELIEVES, PROVIDE POWERFUL MOTIVATION FOR FINDING ACCOMMODATION. QUESTION IS WHAT POLITICAL PRICE MAPAI AND AHDUT AVODAH FACTIONS WILL HAVE TO PAY, IN TERMS OF NEW ASSIGNMENT FOR DAYAN AND PRESERVING REMAINDER OF HIS PRESTIGE, TO KEEP HIS RAFI FACTION IN TOW. RAFI WILL ALSO WANT VOICE IN SELECTION OF DAYAN'S SUCCESSOR AT DEFENSE MINISTRY.

5. WE ALSO ARE INCLINED TO BELIEVE THAT CHANCES FOR FINDING LAST-MINUTE SOLUTION ARE BETTER THAN EVEN. BUT, EVEN IF GOVERNMENT SURVIVES TOMORROW'S EVENTS, STRUGGLE FOR CONTROL OF LABOR PARTY IS CERTAIN TO CONTINUE, AND ALONG WITH IT INSTABILITY AND UNCERTAINTY WHICH HAVE COME TO CHARACTERIZE DOMESTIC POLITICAL SCENE.  
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## Message Attributes

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